

Floor Statement of Rep. Ben Ray Luján
Safe Climate Caucus
April 23, 2013

Mr. Speaker, at a time when our communities are dealing with the impact of climate change, cuts from the sequester will negatively impact our long-term efforts to combat this challenge.

Energy conservation is a vital component of reducing carbon emissions. Weatherization programs and the Energy Star program have been instrumental in reducing energy consumption. In 2011, Energy Star helped Americans reduce emissions by the equivalent of 41 million vehicles, and during these tough times, it cut utility bills by \$23 billion. As a result of the sequester, further progress on these programs is at risk.

Research and development in clean energy technologies are essential to reducing our dependence on oil and cutting emissions. Sequestration's funding reductions threaten to slow developments in solar and advanced battery technology.

Sadly, my Republican colleagues have been reluctant to even debate further action to address climate change. That is one more reason why we cannot afford to sit by and do nothing while sequestration reduces the effectiveness of the programs we already have in place that are part of the climate change solution.